

Research Materials/Source Documents
AWARDS & DECORATIONS

FILE TITLE: TSgt Forrest Lee Vosler, Medal of Honor Recipient - WW II

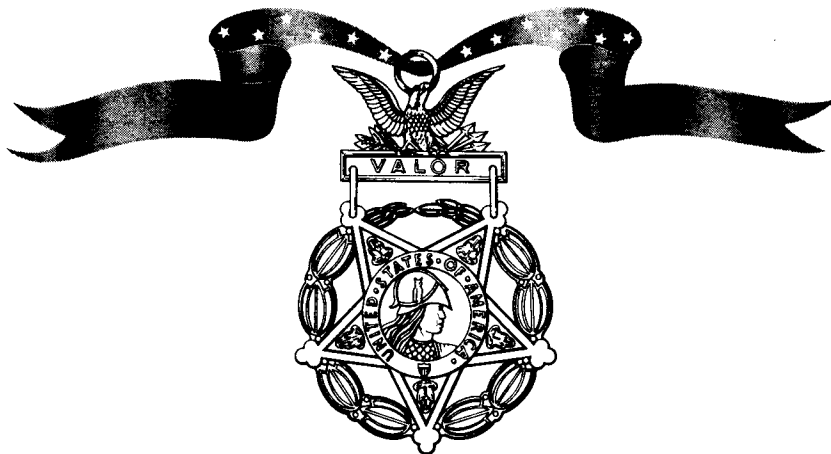
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APPROVED BY: Gary R. Akin
GARY R. AKIN, CMSgt, USAF
Director
Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute



The President of the United States

in the name of

The Congress

takes pleasure in presenting the

Medal of Honor

to

VOSLER, FORREST L. (Air Mission)

Rank and organization: Technical Sergeant, U.S. Army Air Corps, 358th Bomber Squadron, 303d Bomber Group. *Place and date:* Over Bremen, Germany, 20 December 1943. *Entered service at:* Rochester, N.Y. *Born:* 29 July 1923, Lyndonville, N.Y. *G.O. No.:* 73, 6 September 1944. *Citation:* For conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a radio operator-air gunner on a heavy bombardment aircraft in a mission over Bremen, Germany, on 20 December 1943. After bombing the target, the aircraft in which T/Sgt. Vosler was serving was severely damaged by antiaircraft fire, forced out of formation, and immediately subjected to repeated vicious attacks by enemy fighters. Early in the engagement a 20-mm. cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, painfully wounding T/Sgt. Vosler in the legs and thighs. At about the same time a direct hit on the tail of the ship seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered the tail guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for firepower in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, T/Sgt. Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter another 20-mm. enemy shell exploded, wounding T/Sgt. Vosler in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first-aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle, and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, T/Sgt. Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched, T/Sgt. Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crewmembers could help them into the dinghy. T/Sgt. Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness, and skill he displayed in the face of great odds, when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crewmember, were outstanding.

HERO: TSGT FORREST LEE VOSLER

By MSgt Leslie E. Amidon

In his auditorium lecture, A View from the CMSAF, Chief Campanale emphasized the importance of preserving our enlisted heritage. In this essay, I will describe the events which led up to the award of the Medal of Honor to Technical Sergeant Forrest Lee Vosler. My hope is that I can, in some small way, assist the Enlisted Heritage Hall, Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex, Alabama, in this historical preservation. The mission begins like this.

On December 20, 1943, twenty-year-old Forrest Lee "Woody" Vosler took-off from the English countryside serving as a radio operator and aerial gunner aboard *Jersey Bounce Jr.*, a B-17 Flying Fortress of the 303d Bomb Group's 358th Bomb Squadron. This mission, his fourth and last, was an extremely dangerous daylight assault on Bremen, Germany, deep in the industrial heartland.

As Vosler's B-17 neared its target, intense anti-aircraft fire exploded all around the plane. In an interview recorded for public television, Vosler said, "The flak was so thick you could walk on it." (1) At this point, the plane sustained a direct hit knocking out one of its four engines. After ensuring the plane was still air worthy to continue its mission, the pilot relinquished control of the crippled aircraft to the bombardier who guided it to the target and dropped the bombs. The pilot then regained control of *Jersey Bounce Jr.* and turned the plane 180 degrees to begin the return trip to England. It was at that point that the plane was again hit by flak damaging a second engine. No longer able to maintain speed or altitude, the bomber was forced out of formation and began to descend to the German fighters waiting below.

As soon as the stricken plane cleared the flak, the fighters attacked. A 20mm shell ripped through the fuselage and exploded into the radio compartment damaging the radio and rendering it inoperative. Hot metal burned into Vosler's legs, arms, hand, and chest causing blood to ooze out of the top of his boots. Vosler remembered in the PBS video Heroes, "I couldn't control my hands. I was so nervous I couldn't have held the gun. Then things happened. My whole life ... went past me in seconds... I began to count my minutes, not my days." (1) In the book *Above and Beyond*, the editors of the Boston Publishing Company quoted Vosler, " It was at that moment the fear of death left me to be replaced by a feeling that I might as well die standing up." (2:209)

At about the same time a direct hit on the rear of the airplane seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered his guns inoperative. Vosler also noticed both waist gunners and the ball turret gunner were out of their positions leaving the back of the B-17 totally defenseless to the swarming enemy fighters. Realizing the need to protect the

vulnerable tail of the bomber, a determined Vosler began a steady stream of fire to take up the slack.

Moments later another enemy 20mm shell exploded nearby, sending shrapnel into both his chest and face. Pieces of metal lodged in both of his eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Weakened by blood loss, unable to stand, and with metal fragments in his eyes blurring his vision, he declined first-aid, climbed to the edge of his radio operator's table, and continued to fire at the blurred images. Fortunately, the German fighters had to turn back before they could finish off the crippled plane. Vosler then performed first aid on the badly wounded tail gunner before receiving aid himself.

Losing altitude and fuel rapidly, the Flying Fortress approached the east coast of France and the crew jettisoned every bit of extra weight. Vosler begged to be thrown from the crippled plane, with or without a parachute, to save weight in the hope that the ship could make the English coast; a request his fellow crew members refused to honor.

The pilot struggled to keep the plane airborne until it reached the English Channel off Cromer, England. It was there that the pilot announced his decision to ditch the limping bomber. Despite his wounds and the blood running out of his badly damaged eyes, Vosler repaired the battle damaged radio entirely by touch and started sending out distress signals. He received an immediate response from Headquarters in England who directed the B-17 to a Norwegian trawler in the North Sea. The pilot miraculously flew the crippled B-17 to the waiting ship and ditched in the sea.

The plane skidded to a stop and immediately began to fill with water. Vosler and the rest of the crew scrambled onto the wing and the unwounded readied a life raft. Vosler saw the tail gunner fall into the water. Despite the great pain from his own wounds, he grabbed the severely wounded tail gunner and held him with one hand while holding the plane's wire radio antenna with the other saving the wounded tail gunner from certain death. The other crew members rushed to Vosler's aid and helped both wounded men aboard the raft as the bomber sank below the waves. Six men, out of the ship's crew of ten, had perished during the mission. The survivors were rescued by the Norwegian trawler two hours later and a short time later were transported to England for medical treatment.

Technical Sergeant Vosler's conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty saved the lives of his comrades. For this he was presented the nation's highest award, The Medal of Honor. It is important for us as enlisted airmen to understand that our shared heritage lends credibility to all of us. What we must do is preserve our heritage and ensure our actions also lend credibility to that heritage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "Interview with Forrest Lee Vosler." Heroes. Capital Cities/ABC Video Enterprises, Inc., 1989
2. Hardy, Gordon, Kennedy, Denis, and Collins, Peter D.. Above and Beyond: A history of the Medal of Honor from the Civil War to Vietnam. Boston: Boston Publishing Company, 1985

Ordeal by Flak and Fighter

Though severely wounded, Sergeant Vosler steadfastly stood to his post aboard the mortally crippled B-17 bomber.

BY WILLIAM P. SCHLITZ
SENIOR EDITOR

THE Eighth Air Force continued its sustained assault on Bremen, Germany, on December 20, 1943. On that day, twenty-year-old **Forrest L. Vosler** was serving as a radio operator and aerial gunner aboard *Jersey Bounce Jr.*, a B-17 Flying Fortress of the 303d Bomb Group's 358th Bomb Squadron.

Sergeant Vosler had been in England since October, and was on only his fourth combat mission.

Coming off the target, *Jersey Bounce Jr.* was heavily damaged by antiaircraft fire and drifted out of formation to become of immediate interest to predatory enemy fighters.

In the attacks that followed, a 20-mm cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, wounding Sergeant Vosler in the legs and thighs. The radio was damaged and rendered inoperative. At about the same time, the tail gunner was seriously wounded by a direct hit on the tail of the plane, and his guns were put out of commission.

Vosler, realizing the need to protect the vulnerable tail of the bomber, began a steady stream of fire to take up the slack. As enemy fighters continued to swarm about the crippled bomber, a determined Sergeant Vosler fought back.

A short time later, another shell exploded in the plane, hitting the Sergeant in the chest and face. Refusing first aid, and with metal fragments in his eyes blurring his vision, he kept firing his guns.

Jersey Bounce Jr. survived the ordeal over the North Sea until off Cromer, England. It was there that

the pilot announced his decision to ditch the limping bomber. Though blinded, Sergeant Vosler managed to repair the aircraft's battle-damaged radio entirely by touch. With the set now operating, Vosler sent out distress calls in between periods of unconsciousness.

The plane slammed into the water. Sergeant Vosler groped his way, without assistance, onto a wing. There he held the severely wounded tail gunner from slipping under until the other crew members could help them both into a dinghy.

They were subsequently taken aboard a Norwegian coaster. A short time later a fast motor patrol boat directed to the vessel by air/sea rescue took the two wounded men to England.

"I don't know what happened to the others," Mr. Vosler said in a recent interview. "I was confined to hospitals in England until my re-

turn to the United States in March 1944."

On his return to the US, Sergeant Vosler was presented the Medal of Honor for his bravery by President Roosevelt at a White House ceremony. Vosler is one of only three Eighth Air Force enlisted men to receive the nation's highest award during World War II.

Sergeant Vosler continued to receive treatment at various hospitals until he was discharged from service in October 1944, with the rank of technical sergeant (his promotion came through two weeks after he was wounded).

Employed by a radio station while earning a college degree, in 1946 Mr. Vosler became one of the charter members of the fledgling Air Force Association's board of national directors.

Today, he lives in Baldwinsville, N. Y. ■



In early 1946 President Harry S. Truman welcomed to the White House six officers of the newly formed Air Force Association, among them Medal of Honor winner Forrest L. Vosler. The distinguished company, from left: AFA's first President, Jimmy Doolittle; Willis Fitch; Forrest Vosler; the President; second AFA President Tom Lanphier, Jr.; Meryll Frost; and Jimmy Stewart.

TSgt Forrest L. Vosler

Five Air Force enlisted men have received the Medal of Honor for heroism displayed while serving their country. All five served as aircrew members.

PRE-MISSION:

TSgt Forrest Lee "Woody" Volser (Army Serial Number 12168197)

Occupation at Enlist: Drill Press Operator

Eye Color: Brown

Hair Color: Brown

Complexion: Light

Heighth: 6ft, 3in, (too tall to join Air Corps, bribed Sgt at the processing center to let him in. Service record report height as 6ft, 1in)

Army Specialty: Aerial Gunner (expert qualified)/radio operator

Born in Lyndonville, N.Y..	29 Jul 1923
Enlisted US Army Air Corps at Rochester, NY(19yr, 2.5 mths old), Private	8 Oct 42
Basic Training, Atlantic City, NJ	
Reported to Radio Operator and Mechanics School, Scott Field, Illinois	4 Nov 42
Private First Class, Army of the United States, Air Corps	4 Mar 43
Radio Operator and Mechanics School, Scott Field, Illinois, 18 weeks	23 Mar 43
Army Air Forces Flexible Gunnery School, Harlingen, Texas, 6-weeks	22 May 43
Sgt, Army of the United States, Air Corps	25 May 43
Asgnd 18th Replacement Wing, Salt Lake City, Utah	
Asgnd Army Air Base, Peyote, Tx, pending oversea assignment	2 Jun 43
Promoted to SSgt, Army of the US, Air Corps, Peyote, Tx	1 Aug 43
Left U.S. for European Theater of Operations	7 Oct 43
Arrived Scotland	17 Oct 43
Last Mission, Bremen, Germany	20 Dec 43
TSgt (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	3 Jan 44
Awarded Purple Heart: GO 9, HQ 30th Gen Hosp	25 Jan 44
Left European Theatre of Operations	26 Feb 44
Air Medal: GO 229, HQ Eighth Air Force	29 Mar 44
Return to U.S.	6 Mar 44
Medal of Honor Presented by President, White House. Pinned on by Under Secretary of War Patterson	17 Apr 44
Medal of Honor WD GO 73	6 Sep 44

Hnrbl Dschrg, Valley Forge General Hospital at Phoenixville, Pa.
Visited SNCOA
Died of heart attack
Memorial service at Fort Meyer Chapel, VA.
Buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

17 Oct 44
5-7 Mar 86
17 Feb 92

PLANE: B-17F Heavy Bombardment Aircraft, #42-29664, Jersey Bounce Jr.

MISSION:

Took off from English Countryside

Technical Sergeant Forrest Vosler of the 8th Air Force, a native of upstate New York, said that it took him just one flight over Germany to be "absolutely sure [he] was doomed" and that he should "sit down and write [his] folks a last letter." Scheduled for 25 missions, his fourth mission almost proved his fears correct.

The Eighth Air Force continued its sustained daylight assault on Bremen, Germany, on December 20, 1943. On that day, twenty-year-old SSgt. Forrest L. Vosler was serving as a radio operator and aerial gunner aboard Jersey Bounce Jr., a B-17 Flying Fortress of the 303d Bomb Group's 358th Bomb Squadron.

AA so intense that there is no spot where you can see the ground, Flak so thick you could walk on it

Lost engine (due to flak) going to target, tell by reduced sound in plane

As Vosler's B-17 neared Bremen on December 22, 1943, flak destroyed one of its four engines.

Was able to drop bombs on target.

Second engine damaged

After unloading bombs, Jersey Bounce Jr. wheeled 180 degrees to begin the return trip to England. Then flak hit a second engine, forcing the craft to drop out of formation and become of immediate interest to predatory German fighters below, who awaited crippled B-17s like sharks in a feeding frenzy. German fighters immediately and repeatedly attacked the stricken aircraft as soon as it cleared the flak.

received first injury from fighter

Vosler watched as two other bombers were attacked, exploded, and disintegrated. As soon as his stricken plane cleared the flak, the German fighters attacked. A 20mm shell ripped through the fuselage and exploded into the radio compartment. Hot metal burned into his legs, arms, hand, and chest as blood oozed out of the top of his boots from wounds in his feet

and legs. Vosler remembered: "I couldn't control my hands. I was so nervous I couldn't have held the gun. Then things happened. My whole life ... went past me in seconds.... I'm not talking about skimming. Getting up in the morning, doing the whole routine." The fear of death left him, though, to be replaced by a feeling that he "might as well die standing up.

tail gunner out of commission due to german pilot

The radio was damaged and rendered inoperative. At about the same time a direct hit on the tail gunner seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered his guns inoperative. This left him unable to fire his weapon and defend the vulnerable back of the B-17 against the swarming enemy fighters. Vosler, realizing the need to protect the vulnerable tail of the bomber, began a steady stream of fire to take up the slack. As enemy fighters continued to swarm about the crippled bomber, a determined Sergeant Vosler fought back.

waist gunners and ball turret out of position

saw plane just beyond tail, close enough to recognize pilot

looking down barrel of 20mm cannon

pilot out of ammo or would not have survived

Shot at a German pilot, throttled off behind aircraft

20mm shell explodes, metal hits him in face injures both eyes, only see blurred shapes

Shortly thereafter another enemy 20mm shell exploded nearby, sending shrapnel into both his chest and face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes.

did not want to kill him, only wanted to get even

Unable to stand, bleeding, and with metal fragments in his eyes blurring his vision, he declined to take first-aid treatment and climbed to the edge of his radio operator's table and he kept firing at the blurred images until the German fighters were driven off. " Fortunately, the German fighters had to turn back before they could finish off the crippled plane. Although seriously wounded, Vosler helped the badly wounded tail gunner before receiving aid himself.

When the enemy fighter attack ceased and it seemed that ditching was imminent, he then begged to be thrown from the crippled plane, with or without a parachute, to save weight in the hope that the ship could make the English coast minus his weight,." a request his fellow crew members refused to honor

fixed battle damaged radio strictly by feel and sent out SOS

Vosler's radio had been knocked out during the fighting, and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, despite his wounds and the blood running out of his badly damaged eyes, he started repairing the radio entirely by touch. Although he lapsed into unconsciousness several times, he managed to repair the aircraft's battle-damaged radio and sent out distress signals. Vosler's received an immediate response from England who alerted boats in the channel.

Air Sea rescue circling when landed (ditched) in English Channel

Losing altitude and fuel rapidly, the Flying Fortress approached the east coast of France and the crew jettisoned every bit of extra weight. The pilot struggled to keep the plane airborne until it reached the English Channel off Cromer, England. It was there that the pilot announced his decision to ditch the limping bomber. Via the radio, Headquarters directed the B-17 to a Norwegian trawler in the North Sea and the pilot miraculously flew the crippled B-17 to the waiting ship and ditched.

Saved the wounded tail gunner from certain death before the bomber sank below the waves.

The plane skidded to a stop in the Channel and immediately began to fill with water. Sergeant Vosler groped his way, without assistance, onto a wing. The rest of the crew scrambled out onto the wing and the unwounded readied a raft. In doing so they left the tail gunner standing unattended for a few seconds. Vosler saw the gunner pitching forward into the water. Despite the great pain from his own wounds, he grabbed the severely wounded tail gunner and held him up with one hand while holding the plane's wire radio antenna with the other until the other crew members scrambled to Vosler's aid and helped both wounded men aboard the raft.

They men were rescued by a Norwegian fishing boat two hours later and were subsequently taken aboard a Norwegian coaster. A short time later a fast motor patrol boat directed to the vessel by air/sea rescue took the two wounded men to England.

POST MISSION:

From this fateful mission only four of the ten crew members survived. "I don't know what happened to the others," Mr. Vosler said in a recent interview. "I was confined to hospitals in England until my return to the United States in March 1944." Sergeant Vosler continued to receive treatment at various hospitals until he was discharged from service in October 1944, with the rank of technical sergeant (his promotion came through two weeks after he was wounded).

For eight months he was totally blind. One eye was removed in an operation, but doctors held out hope that he might regain sight in his other eye. President Roosevelt delayed the ceremony in which Vosler was to receive his medal, waiting for the heroic airman to regain his sight. Eight months later, Vosler was indeed able to see the president as he spoke to him in the Oval Office. The president was unable to stand so Unser Secretary of War Patterson pinned the medal on.

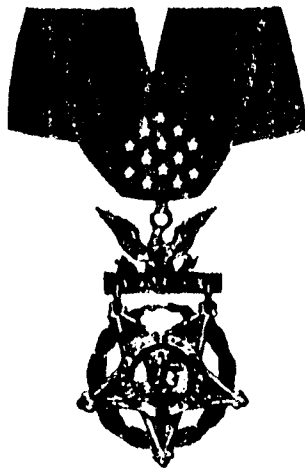
Employed by a radio station while earning a college degree, in 1946 Mr. Vosler became one of the charter members of the fledgling Air Force Association's board of national directors.

After WWII Went to work for the Veteran's Administration

In early 1946 President Harry S. Truman welcomed to the White House six officers of the newly formed Air Force Association among them Medal of Honor winner Forrest L. Vosler. The distinguished company, from left: AFA's first President, Jimmy Doolittle; Willis Fitch; Forrest Vosler; the President; second AFA President Tom Lanphier, Jr.; Meryll Frost; and Jimmy Stewart.

Tsgt Vosler was highly decorated. He earned the WW II Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, ETO Ribbon, Air Crew Member Badge, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with one Bronze Service Star for participating in the Air Offensive Europe Campaign, Aviation Badge "Aerial Gunner", and the Bronze Star

TSgt Vosler died on February 17, 1992 after a long life spent with responsibility to live up to medal. His flag-draped casket was carried by a horse-drawn caisson to the national cemetery. Following the funeral ceremony and a haunting rendition of "Taps," Lt. Gen. Charles A. May Jr., Air Force assistant vice chief of staff, presented the flag to Vosler's wife, Virginia "Jenny". Vosler said "I was chosen to represent a lot of people"



ARMY

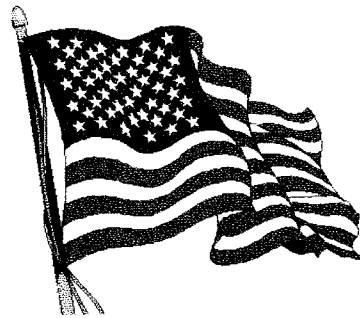
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE NAME OF THE CONGRESS TAKES PLEASURE IN PRESENTING THE MEDAL OF HONOR TO TECHNICAL SERGEANT FORREST L. VOSLER (AIR MISSION), U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS, 358TH BOMBER SQUADRON, 303RD BOMBER GROUP, OVER BREMEN, GERMANY, 20 DECEMBER 1943. FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY IN ACTION AGAINST THE ENEMY ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY WHILE SERVING AS A RADIO OPERATOR-AIR GUNNER ON A HEAVY BOMBARDMENT AIRCRAFT IN A MISSION OVER BREMEN, GERMANY, ON 20 DECEMBER 1943. AFTER BOMBING THE TARGET, THE AIRCRAFT IN WHICH T/SGT VOSLER WAS SERVING WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED BY ANTIAIRCRAFT FIRE, FORCED OUT OF FORMATION, AND IMMEDIATELY SUBJECTED TO REPEATED VICIOUS ATTACKS BY ENEMY FIGHTERS. EARLY IN THE ENGAGEMENT A 20-MM CANNON SHELL EXPLODED IN THE RADIO COMPARTMENT, PAINFULLY WOUNDING T/SGT VOSLER IN THE LEGS AND THIGHS. AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, A DIRECT HIT ON THE TAIL OF THE SHIP SERIOUSLY WOUNDED THE TAIL GUNNER AND RENDERED THE TAIL GUNS INOPERATIVE. REALIZING THE GREAT NEED FOR FIREPOWER IN PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE TAIL OF THE SHIP, T/SGT VOSLER, WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, KEPT UP A STEADY STREAM OF DEADLY FIRE. SHORTLY THEREAFTER ANOTHER 20-MM ENEMY SHELL EXPLODED, WOUNDING T/SGT VOSLER IN THE CHEST AND ABOUT THE FACE. PIECES OF METAL LODGED IN BOTH EYES, IMPAIRING HIS VISION TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT HE COULD ONLY DISTINGUISH BLURRED SHAPES. DISPLAYING REMARKABLE TENACITY AND COURAGE, HE KEPT FIRING HIS GUNS AND DECLINED TO TAKE FIRST-AID TREATMENT. THE RADIO EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN RENDERED INOPERATIVE DURING THE BATTLE, AND WHEN THE PILOT ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO DITCH, ALTHOUGH UNABLE TO SEE AND WORKING ENTIRELY BY TOUCH, T/SGT VOSLER FINALLY GOT THE SET OPERATING AND SENT OUT DISTRESS SIGNALS DESPITE SEVERAL LAPSES INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS. WHEN THE SHIP DITCHED, T/SGT VOSLER MANAGED TO GET OUT ON THE WING BY HIMSELF AND HOLD THE WOUNDED TAIL GUNNER FROM SLIPPING OFF UNTIL THE OTHER CREWMEMBERS COULD HELP THEM INTO THE DINGHY. T/SGT VOSLER'S ACTIONS ON THIS OCCASION WERE AN INSPIRATION TO ALL SERVING WITH HIM. THE EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE, COOLNESS, AND SKILL HE DISPLAYED IN THE FACE OF GREAT ODDS, WHEN HANDICAPPED BY INJURIES THAT WOULD HAVE INCAPACITATED THE AVERAGE CREWMEMBER, WERE OUTSTANDING.

Building Dedication Committee

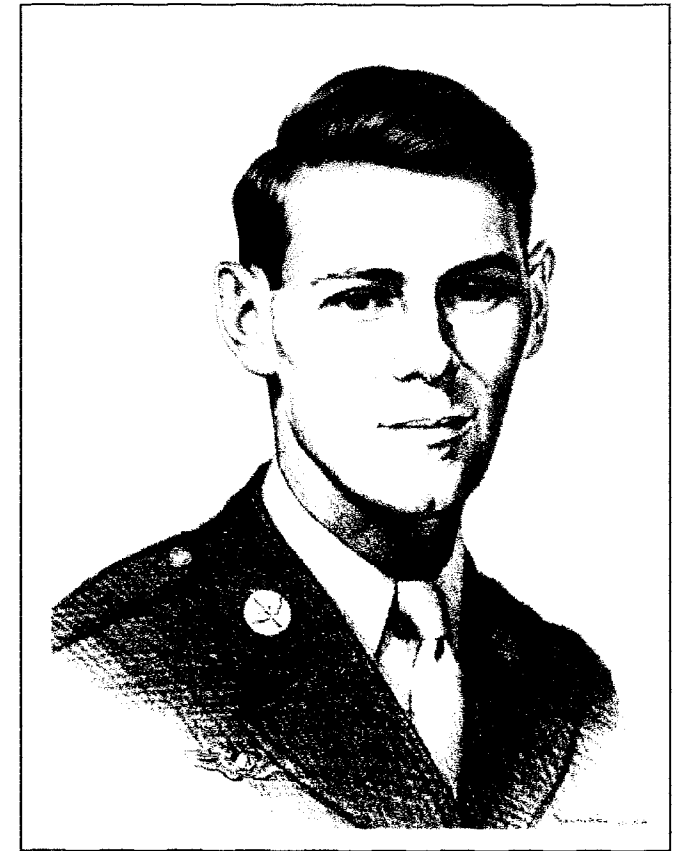
Dedication Manager
Social Coordinator
Setup Coordinator
Video Support

TSgt David Robinson
Ms Dana Payne
MSgt Glen Anzai
Mr Terence Bartusiak
MSgt Les Amidon
TSgt Norm Bennett

Programs



We'd like to express our sincerest appreciation to the members of TSgt Vosler's family who have attended today's ceremony. You can be assured that his courage and sacrifice will live forever as an example to those of us who share his proud heritage.



Technical Sergeant Forrest L. Vosler

**Vosler Academic Development Center
Dedication Ceremony
Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi
27 October, 1995**

-----OJT CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE-----

The Qualification Training Flight of the 333d Training Squadron, formerly the 1872d Training Development Squadron, provides the Air Force C4 (Command, Control, Communications and Computers) community with the highest quality OJT (on-the-job) training resources to support the warfighter. Based on our customers' requirements, we analyzed OJT needs, develop and revise high quality, standardized products, and implement new continuation training technologies and delivery media.

Our **Production Element** develops exportable OJT programs for 28 different enlisted specialties in the C4 area. We have produced over 650 Air Force Job Qualification Standards and Air Force Training Packages, with more than 250 currently in use. With the continuing expansion of our **Interactive Courseware Element**, we have secured a premier role in maintaining C4 readiness worldwide. Our authoring systems specialists use state-of-the-art software to produce computer-based interactive courseware.

Each of our curriculum developers is a highly trained technician with a broad range of experience in his or her Air Force specialty. We are always available to our customers for consultation, assistance, and feedback. We stand by our products!

Interservice Radio Frequency Management School

The 335th Training Squadron, through the **Joint Spectrum Management Course**, provides spectrum management education for Department of Defense (DOD) technicians, engineers, managers and other interested individuals who require the latest information on national, international, and DOD frequency management regulations and procedures. Emphasis is placed on those national and international regulations and standards that have particular impact on the global mission of U.S. military forces. The course of instruction also covers various communications concepts, with emphasis on the physical nature of these systems.

The
**333d Training Squadron
Qualification Training Flight**
and the

**Interservice Radio
Frequency Management School**

welcome you to the

**Vosler Academic Development Center
Dedication Ceremony**

Master of Ceremonies

Captain Eliot Langsam

.....

Invocation

Remarks

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Reception

THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

The military is a special and unique calling where the people who serve within it can be called upon at a moment's notice to lay down their lives in the defense of their nation. It is the sacrifices of these individuals that guarantee the freedoms we so often take for granted. During moments of war and conflict, the actions of a few have exceeded the normal call to duty. These acts were so singularly distinctive in their courage, selflessness, and bravery that our government felt they would only be recognized by the award of a Medal of Honor.

General Washington started it all in 1782. Sacrifices at Bunker Hill, Lexington, and Valley Forge had won independence for the United States. The General felt that some kind of recognition should be given to the common men of the continental army whose efforts extended beyond the normal call of duty. Thus, the badge of Military Merit (the Purple Heart), our country's first military decoration, was born. From that first decoration, awarded to only three men, grew both the philosophy and the method of which this country expresses its appreciation to those deserving members of its military. Following that guideline, the Medal of Honor, authorized by Congress and first awarded in 1863, was the only Medal given during the Civil War.

Over the years a set of uncompromising standards evolved for the awarding of the Medal of Honor. The deed must be proved by incontestable evidence of at least two eyewitnesses; it must be so outstanding it clearly distinguishes gallantry beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery; it must involve the risk of life; and it must be the type of deed which, if not done, would not be subjected to any justified criticism.

The Medal of Honor holds a special place in the hearts of all men and women of the armed forces. It conjures up memories of fallen friends and comrades who make the ultimate sacrifice. It is a token presented by a grateful nation to be worn without words for all to see and honor. Not constructed of precious metals, instead forged by incredible deeds--deeds of courage, honor, valor, and sacrifice. These traits cannot be taught or planned, but come from within. These are virtues and values a person grows up with, the fiber that holds his being together. These men have a deep personal integrity that cannot be bound by laws or other obligations but something so personal that it drives them to do great feats. These feats are so great and selfless that all too often the Medal of Honor has been awarded posthumously to those who died preserving the freedoms guaranteed to all Americans and admired by all mankind. The Medal of Honor is awarded, lest we forget the great sacrifices these men have made; thus not a reward for the person who wears it, but recognition by those who will never know the test or ever be called to give, without thinking or questioning, something so precious as their own life for another.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

John 15.13



CITATION

"For conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a radio operator-air gunner on a heavy bombardment aircraft in a mission over Bremen, Germany, on 20 December 1943. After bombing the target, the aircraft in which Sergeant Vosler was serving was severely damaged by antiaircraft fire, forced out of formation, and immediately subjected to repeated vicious attacks by enemy fighters. Early in the engagement a 20mm cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, painfully wounding Sergeant Vosler in the legs and thighs. At about the same time, a direct hit on the tail of the ship seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered the tail guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for fire power in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, Sergeant Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter, another 20mm enemy shell exploded, wounding Sergeant Vosler in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, Sergeant Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched, Sergeant Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crew members could help them into the dinghy. Sergeant Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness, and skill he displayed in the face of great odds, when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crew member, were outstanding."

ARTICLE IN STARS AND STRIPES NEWSPAPER

GIRL OFFERS AN EYE TO SAVE SIGHT OF FLYING FORT HERO

A California girl has offered one of her eyes to T/Sgt. Forrest Vosler, of Livonia, N.Y., a Fortress hero wounded by shell fragments who wanted to be thrown out of the plane to lighten its load, the United Press reported. The girl, wife of a U.S. sailor, read of Vosler's bravery Feb. 15 and made her offer in a letter to the press association's London bureau.

Vosler is now in the U.S. or on his way. Flight surgeons who originally had little hope for his eyesight said his right eye seemed to "be coming along pretty well" but that the left eye was not showing much improvement. They explained there was a good chance that it would not be necessary for the girl to give up her eye, even if Vosler consented to accept it.

Vosler's squadron flight surgeon, Capt. Harold Broady, of Lowell, Mass., said there were previous instances of corneal transplantings and that it might be possible to remove the outer covering of one person's eye and give it to another person.

During visit to SNCOA

Notes from Discussion with [redacted] Vaster. Mar 4-5-6 1986

- Meeting in Gen Arnold's office, saluting dilemma.
- Tremendous casualties in 8th AF
- Comments about Spaatz, Vandenberg,
- Too big to join the AF 6:03, bribed the Sgt at the processing center on height.
- Later hit his head on door, Capt took him to tower, measured him finally let him go.
Problem with fitting into the ball turret,
- Press/Media question about life without the medals
- Lost sight in Right eye, later went blind in good eye
- Asked what he thought about, during ~~re~~ actions which won M of H
- Experiences with Erwin, Leighton,

Forrest L. Vosler
838 Fairway Circle
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

3/29/84.

Dear Chief Renfroe,

Just a note to let you and your staff know how much I appreciate being invited to the Senior N.E.O. Academy.

It was a first for me, and one I shall always remember. The treatment I received from you and your staff was excellent. A great big thanks to all.

We are still in Florida, and will be staying in the Lam Camp at MacDill AFB. for 3 or 4 more weeks before heading North.

My very best wishes,

Woody

WORLD WAR II

clear of the wreckage. After clinging to a piece of floating wreckage until he could muster sufficient strength to inflate his life vest he began a search for the crew member whom he believed to be aboard. Failing to find anyone he began swimming and was found approximately 80 minutes later by an air sea rescue craft. By his extraordinary flying skill and gallant leadership, despite his grave injury, Colonel Vance led his formation to a successful bombing of the assigned target and returned the crew to a point where they could bail out with safety. His gallant and valorous decision to ditch the aircraft in order to give the crew member he believed to be aboard a chance for life exemplifies the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States.

Purple Heart - GO 99, Hq 2d Bomb Div, 8 Jun 44
World War II Victory Medal
American Defense Service Medal
American Campaign Medal
European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with one Bronze Service Star
for participation in the Air Offensive Europe Campaign
Aviation Badge "Pilot"

VOSLER, FORREST LEE 125 100 1922

Forrest Lee Vosler was born 29 July 1922 at Lyndonville, New York

PROMOTIONS

Private, Army of the United States, Air Corps	8 Oct 42
Private First Class, Army of the United States, Air Corps	4 Mar 43
Sergeant (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	25 May 43
Staff Sergeant (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	1 Aug 43
Technical Sergeant (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	8 Jan 44

SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Radio Operator and Mechanics School, Scott Field, Illinois	1942
Army Air Forces Flexible Gunnery School, Harlingen, Texas	1943

RATED Aerial Gunner

DETAILS OF SERVICE

Sergeant Vosler enlisted as a Private in the Army of the United States for service in the Air Corps on 8 October 1942 at Rochester, New York. He received his basic training at Atlantic City, New Jersey, and on 4 November 1942, he reported to the Radio Operator and Mechanics School at Scott Field, Illinois. After graduating from the school on 28 March 1943, he departed for Harlingen, Texas, to attend the Flexible Gunnery School. He successfully completed his training on 22 May 1943.

He then was assigned to the 18th Replacement Wing at Salt Lake City, Utah, and on 2 June 1943, he was transferred to the Army Air Base at Peyote, Texas, pending an overseas assignment. On 7 October 1943, he departed the United States for duty in the European Theater of Operations.

Upon his arrival in the European Theater, he was assigned to the 258th Bombardment Squadron, 203d Bombardment Group, with the duties of radio operator and aerial gunner. On 20 December 1943, while participating in his fourth mission over Bremen, Germany, he was seriously wounded in action. He was hospitalized overseas until his return to the United States on 6 March 1944, and then received treatment at various hospitals.

Sergeant Vosler was awarded the nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, for his heroic actions on 20 December 1943. This decoration was presented to him by President Roosevelt at the White House.

MEDAL OF HONOR

Sergeant Vosler was honorably discharged at Valley Forge General Hospital, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, on 17 October 1944. His latest address of record is shown as 6 Bradley Street, Marcellus, New York.

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

Presented MH by Pres. FDR, White House, 29 Aug 44

Medal of Honor, WD GO 73, 6 Sep 44 *Citation* - For conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a radio operator-air gunner on a heavy bombardment aircraft in a mission over Bremen, Germany, on 20 December 1943. After bombing the target, the aircraft in which Sergeant Vosler was serving was severely damaged by antiaircraft fire, forced out of formation and immediately subjected to repeated vicious attacks by enemy fighters. Early in the engagement a 20mm cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, painfully wounding Sergeant Vosler in the legs and thighs. At about the same time a direct hit on the tail of the ship seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered the tail guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for fire power in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, Sergeant Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter another 20mm enemy shell exploded, wounding Sergeant Vosler in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, Sergeant Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched Sergeant Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crew members could help them into the dinghy. Sergeant Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness and skill he displayed in the face of great odds, when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crew member, were outstanding.

Air Medal - GO 229, Hq Eighth Air Force, 29 Mar 44

Purple Heart - GO 9, Hq 30th Gen Hosp, 25 Jan 44

World War II Victory Medal

Good Conduct Medal

European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with one Bronze Service Star for participation in the Air Offensive Europe Campaign

Aviation Badge "Aerial Gunner"

36

WALKER, KENNETH NEWTON (012 510)

Kenneth Newton Walker was born 17 July 1898 at Cerrillos, New Mexico

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Private First Class, Aviation Section, Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps	15 Dec 17
Second Lieutenant, United States Army, Air Service	2 Nov 18
Second Lieutenant, Regular Army, Air Service	1 Jul 20
First Lieutenant, Regular Army, Air Service	1 Jul 20
Second Lieutenant, Regular Army, Air Service	15 Dec 22
First Lieutenant, Regular Army, Air Service	24 Jul 24
Captain, Regular Army, Air Corps	1 Aug 25
Major (temporary), Regular Army, Air Corps	20 Oct 25
Major, Regular Army, Air Corps	1 Jul 40
Lieutenant Colonel (temporary), Regular Army, Air Corps	15 Jul 41
Lieutenant Colonel, Army of the United States, Air Corps	15 Sep 41
Colonel (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	1 Mar 42
Colonel, Army of the United States	26 May 42
Brigadier General (temporary), Army of the United States, Air Corps	17 Jun 42
Lieutenant Colonel, Regular Army	11 Jan 43

THE
MEDAL OF HONOR
OF THE
UNITED STATES ARMY



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MORGAN, JOHN C.

Rank and Organization: Second Lieutenant, Air Corps. *Place and Date:* Over Europe, 28 July 1943. *Entered Service at:* New York. *Birth:* Texas. *G. O. No.:* 85, 17 Dec. 1943. *Citation:* For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty, while participating on a bombing mission over enemy-occupied continental Europe, 28 July 1943. Prior to reaching the German coast on the way to the target, the B-17 airplane in which Flight Officer Morgan was serving as copilot was attacked by a large force of enemy fighters, during which the oxygen system to the tail, waist, and radio gun positions was knocked out. A frontal attack placed a cannon shell through the windshield, totally shattering it, and the pilot's skull was split open by a .303 caliber shell, leaving him in a crazed condition. The pilot fell over the steering wheel, tightly clamping his arms around it. Flight Officer Morgan at once grasped the controls from his side and, by sheer strength, pulled the airplane back into formation despite the frantic struggles of the semiconscious pilot. The interphone had been destroyed, rendering it impossible to call for help. At this time the top turret gunner fell to the floor and down through the hatch with his arm shot off at the shoulder and a gaping wound in his side. The waist, tail, and radio gunners had lost consciousness from lack of oxygen and, hearing no fire from their guns, the copilot believed they had bailed out. The wounded pilot still offered desperate resistance in his crazed attempts to fly the airplane. There remained the prospect of flying to and over the target and back to a friendly base wholly unsited. In the face of this desperate situation Flight Officer Morgan made his decision to continue the flight and protect any members of the crew who might still be in the ship and for 2 hours he flew in formation with one hand at the controls and the other holding off the struggling pilot before the navigator entered the steering compartment and relieved the situation. The miraculous and heroic performance of Flight Officer Morgan on this occasion resulted in the successful completion of a vital bombing mission and the safe return of his airplane and crew.

VOSLER, GEORGE

Rank and Organization: Technical Sergeant, Air Corps, Heavy Bombardment Group. *Place and Date:* Over Bremen, Germany, 20 Dec. 1943. *Entered Service at:* Rochester, N. Y. *Birth:* Lyndonville, N. Y. *G. O. No.:* 73, 6 Sept. 1944. *Citation:* For conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a radio operator-air gunner on a heavy bombardment aircraft in a mission over Bremen, Germany, on 20 Dec. 1943. After bombing the target, the aircraft in which Sergeant Vosler was serving was severely

damaged by antiaircraft fire, forced out of formation and immediately subjected to repeated vicious attacks by enemy fighters. Early in the engagement a 20-mm. cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, painfully wounding Sergeant Vosler in the legs and thighs. At about the same time a direct hit on the tail of the ship seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered the tail guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for firepower in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, Sergeant Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter another 20-mm. enemy shell exploded, wounding Sergeant Vosler in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first-aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle, and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, Sergeant Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched, Sergeant Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crew members could help them into the dinghy. Sergeant Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness, and skill he displayed in the face of great odds, when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crew member, were outstanding.

FAR EAST (AUGUST 1942-NOVEMBER 1943)

PEASE, HARL, JR. (Air Mission)

Rank and Organization: Captain, Air Corps, Heavy Bombardment Squadron. *Place and Date:* Near Rabaul, New Britain, 6-7 Aug. 1942. *Entered Service at:* Plymouth, N. H. *Birth:* Plymouth, N. H. *G. O. No.:* 59, 4 Nov. 1942. *Citation:* For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy on 6-7 Aug. 1942. When one engine of the bombardment airplane of which he was pilot failed during a bombing mission over New Guinea, Captain Pease was forced to return to a base in Australia. Knowing that all available airplanes of his group were to participate the next day in an attack on an enemy-held airdrome near Rabaul, New Britain, although he was not scheduled to take part in this mission, Captain Pease selected the most serviceable airplane at this base and prepared it for combat, knowing that it had been found and declared unserviceable for combat missions. With the members of his

years with TAC units at Cannon AFB, N.M.; Incirlik AB, Turkey; and HQ TAC where he was an Ops Briefing Officer. In Oct. 1963 he moved up to Chief of the Unit Training Section at HQ TAC.

VOSLER, Forrest Lee. Technical Sergeant. Medal of Honor. b. Lyndonville, N.Y., July 29, 1923. Forrest Vosler enlisted as a private in the Army at Rochester, N.Y., Oct. 8, 1942. He took basic training at Atlantic City, N.J.; the Radio Operator and Mechanics School at Scott Field, Ill.; and Flexible Gunnery School at Harlingen, Tex. By May 22, 1943 he had successfully completed his training and three days later was promoted to sergeant. He got another stripe in Aug. at Pyote, Tex., while awaiting overseas shipment. In Oct. 1943 he went to Europe as a radio operator and aerial gunner on B-17s assigned to the 8th AF's 358th Bomb Squadron. While participating in his fourth mission, the bombing of Bremen, Germany, Sgt. Vosler was seriously wounded in action, being hit in the legs and thighs when a 20-mm. cannon shell exploded in his radio compartment and his B-17 was forced out of formation. For his gallantry on that mission he was given the Medal of Honor. Its citation, in part, best tells the story: "At about the same time a direct hit on the tail gunner wounded him and rendered his guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for firepower in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, Sgt. Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter another enemy shell

exploded, wounding him in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first-aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, Sgt. Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched, Sgt. Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crew members could help them into the dinghy. Sgt. Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness, and skill he displayed in the face of great odds, when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crew member, were outstanding." Vosler was promoted to technical sergeant two weeks after this mission. He was confined to AF hospitals in England until his return to the U.S. in March 1944. The Medal of Honor was presented to him by President Roosevelt at the White House. Vosler continued to receive treatment at various hospitals until Oct. 17, 1944, when he was honorably discharged from the service at Valley Forge General Hospital at Phoenixville, Pa.

W

WADE, David. Lieutenant General. Commander of SAC's Second Air Force: b. Minden, La., June 15, 1910. David Wade

attended Harris High School in his hometown, Homer Junior College at Homer, La., and Louisiana Polytechnic Institute,



VIALE, Robert M. (2d Lt.) Manila, Luzon, P. I.; 37th Inf. Div.; 5 February 1945. Unable to throw away a live grenade without endangering the lives of his men and some civilians nearby, he held the deadly missile close to his body and bent over it as it exploded. He died a few minutes later.

*Photograph
not
available*

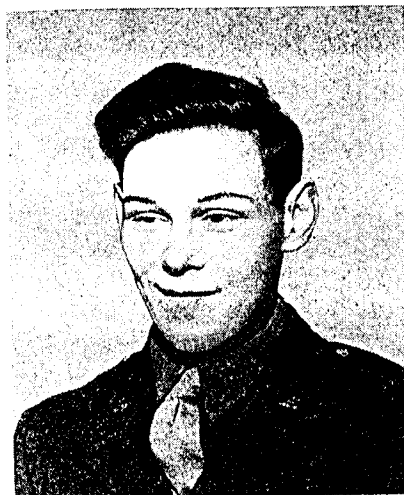
VILLEGAS, Ysmael R. (S Sgt.) Villa Verde Trail, Luzon, P. I.; 32d Inf. Div.; 20 March 1945. In rapid succession he charged five foxholes occupied by Japanese, each time destroying the enemy within. Disregarding the intense enemy fire, he pressed toward a sixth position but he was hit and killed as he neared his goal.



VIUG, Dirk J. (Pfc.) Near Limon, Leyte, P. I.; 32d Inf. Div.; 15 December 1944. Defending a road block with a rocket launcher and six rounds of ammunition, he single-handedly destroyed five enemy tanks that attacked his position as well as several members of the crews.



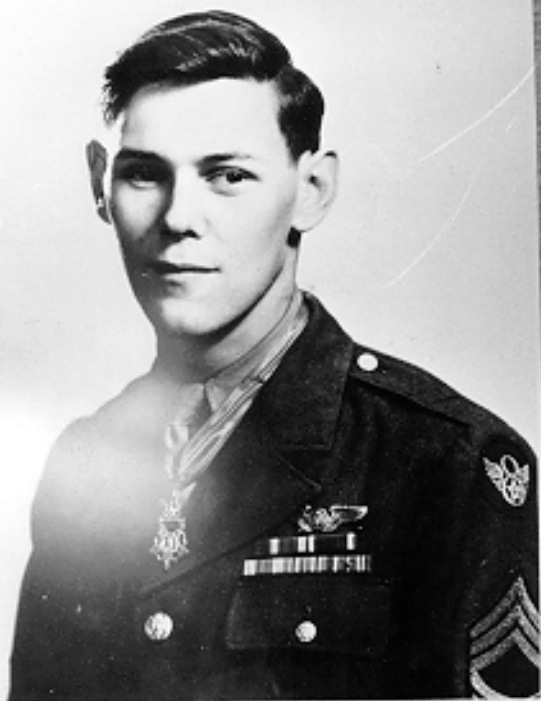
VIUG, Dirk J. (Pfc.) Near Limon, Leyte, P. I.; 32d Inf. Div.; 15 December 1944. Defending a road block with a rocket launcher and six rounds of ammunition, he single-handedly destroyed five enemy tanks that attacked his position as well as several members of the crews.



WAINWRIGHT, Jonathan M. (Gen.) Philippine Islands; U. S. Army Forces, P. I.; 12 March-7 May 1942. He distinguished himself by intrepid and determined leadership against greatly superior enemy forces and the final stand on beleaguered Corregidor, for which he was in an important measure personally responsible, commanded the admiration of the Nation's allies.

WALKER, Kenneth N. (Brig. Gen.) Over Rabaul, New Britain; 5th Bomber Comd.; 5 January 1943. He developed a highly efficient technique for bombing when opposed by enemy fighter craft and by anti-aircraft fire. While leading an effective daylight bombing attack against shipping which resulted in direct hits on nine enemy vessels, his plane was forced down by an attack of a number of enemy fighters.









Life With the Medal



Medal of Honor recipients are introduced by actor James Stewart (left) at Madison Square Garden, New York, in 1948. Left to right, John Kane; William Shono; John Morgan; Jay Zeamer, Jr.; Pierpont Hamilton; William Lawley, Jr.; Forrest Voller; Maynard Smith.

tion. It is, in Ray's words, some responsibility."

Yet receiving the medal usually change the character. A good man will likely not after he has received the award, a ne'er-do-well is no change simply because he has the medal. Of course, most a period of adjustment. This sober young man to let of him drinks into the night, vice-ridden man temporarily his behavior. But once that is over, a man is left pretty same as before the special came his. As Jay Vargas said, as hell didn't make me any

The never-ending stream recognition can be trying for most well-adjusted recipients. His return from a Vietnam camp, James Bond Stock that he was sometimes "eaten" by people's reactions to the. He pawed is not enjoyable. The solution was one that recipients discover: "You learn a to pick your audiences—th

The Medal of Honor changes pro-hometown parades, the public





TSGT FORREST VOSLER
20 DEC 43



